

The Five Principles

Principle #1: Preventive Defense

Preventive Defense is to always respect. Do not offend anyone verbally or physically to cause a confrontation. Respect Rule 1: Watch what you think, feel, say or do in order to set up positive consequences. If you always respect others, chances are you will never have to deal with a physical confrontation. If someone tries to disrespect you, you have the right to defend yourself, but as a Martial Artist, your first responsibility is to try to avoid any physical confrontation.

One way to avoid a physical confrontation is by controlling the space between yourself and the other person or persons. Also, by speaking up in a positive manner and tone of voice, you can try to resolve the problem verbally. When possible, just leave the area.

In some cases, it would be wise to report the situation to an authority, such as Police, Teachers or Yard Duty Attendants. If an authority is available, let them take care of the situation. When we take matters into our own hands, we can sometimes get into trouble. If you've tried everything you can to avoid, and there's still no way out, and they are still trying to hurt you, that's when you can use your Self Defense.

Preventive Defense is one of the most complete, powerful, mental, emotional and physical self defense techniques. If someone is trying to harm you, knowing the fact that you did nothing disrespectful to them and that you did everything you could to avoid their attack will give you tremendous added strength.

Principle #2: Awareness

To be able to prevent anything, you must first be aware of it. There is External Awareness, Internal Awareness, and Self-Awareness.

External Awareness is awareness outside of ourselves, awareness of our physical surroundings. It is easy to get so internally focused that we are not aware of what^{ok} going on around us. An example of using your external awareness would be to imagine yourself standing on a railroad track with a train coming towards you. Your external awareness would alert you to the situation so you could move out of the way. An example of using your external awareness to prevent that situation would be to always look to see if any train is coming in your direction before stepping on the track. It is wise to gain knowledge to help you deal with situations. It is also wise to be alert to where your attention is focused.

Internal Awareness is awareness inside ourselves like our thoughts and feelings or emotions. Thoughts can be powerful and can cause effects. The amount of energy we give thoughts will determine the effects they cause. Thoughts cause feelings and feelings cause energy. Anytime you are feeling something, take a look at what you are thinking and you will see the cause of your feelings. If we feel too much or give too much energy to our thoughts, they can control us. We could find ourselves doing something just because we think we should and not because we want to.

Self-Awareness is awareness of ourselves, our Body, our Mind, and our Emotions. Sometimes we can get so Externally Focused or Internally Focused outside of ourselves that we forget who we are or what is important to us. Balance of concern for ourselves and others is important in life. Our self-awareness is the part of ourselves that realizes that we are breathing, or feeling, or thinking. Knowledge of ourselves is the part that realizes "I can breathe, I can feel, I can think, and if I can think, then I can choose what I think." If we can choose what we think then we can be in control of our thoughts. If we can control our thoughts, then we can control the results of our thoughts. We know thoughts can cause effects and feelings, and we know feelings cause energy. Positive thoughts will cause positive results, give us energy, and make us feel good. Negative thoughts will cause negative results, drain our energy, and make us feel terrible.

Are you in control of your thoughts? Are your thoughts controlling you? Are you getting the results you want? Do you know what results you want?

To check your self-awareness, there is a concentration and relaxation technique that works very well. Find a place where you will not be distracted or disturbed. Sit or lay down with your spine erect. Relax and breathe in slowly through the nose deep into your lower abdomen, and let it out of your mouth slowly. For 10 minutes concentrate your attention

on one thing. For instance, your breathing, or visualize a nice setting like a rainbow, waterfall, or sunset, or listen to gentle music. Once you choose your point of focus, try to stay with it. Before you know it, your mind will have drifted off without you realizing it. Once you realize it has drifted, bring it back to your focus point. Keep repeating this process because your mind will keep drifting. If you practice this technique, you will be able to remain focused longer and your attention span will increase. Your mind slows down its thinking process. Those little nagging thoughts that take your attention and drain your energy will start to disappear and therefore you will feel rested and have more energy after.

Slowing down our conscious mind opens up the gap to our subconscious mind, which is much more aware. For the next 10 minutes instead of blocking out thoughts and focusing on one thing, take a look at each thought, it may be useful later, then let it float on by. This allows room for other thoughts to come in.

During the second half of this technique, our priorities will start to surface, and inspiration about our own selves will come through. Once we take a look at ourselves and see where we are, and the results we are experiencing, we can decide if they are what we want. In most cases, we are probably getting our desired results some of the time. To get the results we want, the first step is to be aware of them. The second step is to think and concentrate on them. The third step is to feel them. The fourth step is to ask yourself if you really want them. If you do want them, the fifth step is to feel what it would be like to already be experiencing the results you desire. Those feelings will give you the energy to stay motivated and keep taking the necessary steps to accomplish your desired results.

Principle #3: Avoiding

The dictionary says to avoid is "to keep away from" and "to prevent the occurrence of". To keep away from anything we must first be aware of it. If we are aware of physical danger we can move away from it. To prevent an occurrence we must be aware of the possibility of that occurrence.

We know that actions cause consequences. A negative action can cause a negative consequence. A positive action can cause a positive consequence. To prevent negative consequences you can use our number one self defense principle, "Preventive Defense"

which is to always respect. That means do not offend anyone verbally or physically to cause a confrontation.

We know that thoughts can cause actions. To avoid negative actions, be aware of your negative thoughts and do something about them before they gain enough power to have any effects. To do something about your negative thoughts means to either change the way you are interpreting that thought into a positive interpretation, or avoid that negative thought by occupying your mind with other things so there is no room for the negative thought.

No action also can cause consequences. We know that if we do not exercise, stretch, and strengthen our mind and bodies then they will weaken, lose energy, deteriorate, get sick easier, and age faster. To avoid or prevent those negative consequences we can also use our Preventive Defense technique. Always respect includes respecting ourselves: respecting our own mind and body by taking positive action to get positive results.

Positive actions can include:

- Reading and learning new things to exercise and strengthen our minds to make us more aware.
- Stretching our bodies to increase circulation, blood flow, energy, flexibility, and to help prevent injury.
- Resistance training to strengthen our body and keep our bones strong, and to also help prevent injury.
- Doing aerobic activities to build and strengthen our hearts so they can pump more blood, not have to work so hard, and help us live longer.

Principle #4: Distance Control

Distance Control in a physical sense means to control the space between yourself and a physical attacker or physical situation. A long time ago, I learned from my Instructor Lee Thompson a very important term called the critical distance line. Lee learned this from Joe Lewis. A few years ago I asked Joe Lewis how he first came up with the term. He said he was reading in a book about two spiders and I believe he said one spider had a very dangerous poison and knew when other spiders were in its striking range.

Understanding and experiencing the importance of the term, I came up with my own words and made it a required verbal technique for belt rank. The Critical Distance Line is a point in distance where one person can strike another before they can respond. The reason why the other cannot respond is because the striker is so close and in motion that the other person does not have enough time to go through all the steps it takes to respond.

The first step to responding is what I call Mental Awareness Speed, "the time it takes to realize something is happening." The second step is Mental Processing Speed, "the time it takes to decide a response and send that message to the body." The third step is Physical Reacting Speed, "the time it takes your body to respond to a message from your mind."

What determines a person's Critical Distance Line is the length of their body and their ability to leap or lunge. Since everyone's critical distance line can be different, it takes experience to learn where it is. To help learn, I created a sparring drill called In and Out 1. One person (A) holds their ground and tries to keep the other away with strikes. This side of the drill teaches you where your own striking range is and-how to control the distance by keeping the other away with strikes. The other person (B) does not strike but moves inside the Critical Distance Line and back out without being hit. This side teaches where the other person's striking range is and gives you a sense of how close you can get and still have time to move out and make them miss their strike.

The reason knowing the Critical Distance Line is so important is because if you can control the line, and someone attacks you, you can move away and keep moving if you have to. But you move just far enough so that you are on the edge of the critical line to be in good position to take advantage of opportunities that may present themselves. There are two ways to control the distance from an attacker:

1. Movement
2. Keeping them away with strikes

If you can control the distance, you can control when the fight starts. If you can control when the fight starts, you can set up the timing so that it starts when you have an advantage. Your best advantage is when you are ready and the other person is not.

Distance control in a mental sense is more challenging to explain and more difficult to do than physical distance control. It is different than physical distance control where you may be able to just move your body away from an attacker or undesirable situation. It's not so easy to just move your body away from your mind or thoughts.

Have you ever had a thought that kept entering your mind and taking your attention that you wished would stop but didn't? When this happens we can try to ignore the thought, but sometimes the thoughts just won't stop presenting themselves. Have you ever tried to leave your mind blank and think about nothing? It doesn't last very long. I think our minds are like the ocean with its constant waves. Our minds have constant thoughts. Mental Distance Control is to control the space where your attention or awareness is. In other words, to control what you're thinking. One way to do this is to stop and use your Mental Awareness and take a look at what you're thinking.

To control what you're thinking and the space where your attention and awareness is, choose a desired thought to think about, be aware of it, and keep focusing your attention on it. This leaves no room for other thoughts to enter. Thoughts have energy, and the more you focus your attention on your desired thought, the more powerful it will become. The less energy you give to an undesired thought, the less energy it will have, and it will not be able to break through your desired focused thought. It's like the saying, "Obstacles are what you see when you take your eyes off the goal."

Distance Control in an Emotional Sense is a little easier to explain because our emotions are governed by our thoughts. To understand this, trace the cause of any feeling and you will find that it started with a thought. Thoughts have energy, and the more you think about a thought the more energy it gains. Thoughts can cause feelings. The more you think about something, the more energy your feelings will gain.

Emotional Distance Control can be accomplished by controlling your thoughts. Controlling your thoughts can be accomplished by using our Mental Distance Control techniques.

Emotional Distance Control can also be used as a motivational technique. Take a desired goal. Think about already having accomplished it and it will feel good. The more you focus on accomplishing it, the better and stronger you will feel about it.

Your feelings have energy, and the more you feel, the more energy you have. The more energy you have about a goal, the easier ideas will come to you to plan your steps to accomplish that goal, and the easier it is to follow through with your steps to accomplish it.

Principle #5: Scouting or Analyzing

Scouting means to study and get information about something. Analyzing means to break something up into its parts or elements. Scouting helps determine how critical a situation or opponent is. It helps you decide if you need to take action or if you can avoid. The intensity of a situation determines the intensity of your response.

To determine how to handle a situation:

First, study its present condition. If it's critical, protect yourself and others if you can while you scout it.

Second, study its cause. If you understand its cause, it can give you ideas how to fix its cause. If you can fix the cause, it could settle the situation.

Third, study its possible future consequences and repercussions. Understanding the consequences of a situation will help determine how critical it is.

Fourth, study the possible future consequences and repercussions of the possible actions you take in handling the situation. Thinking through your options of handling a situation to their end consequences will help you determine the right action or non-action to take.

Our verbal technique of scouting is "Riding the range of striking distance from opponent, blocking, jamming, moving and always working back to the center of the ring, and analyzing your opponent or situation.

Scouting in a fighting sense is a very effective fighting strategy. It is defensive, avoiding first by your movement. Blocking, jamming, moving, and always working back to the center of the ring protects you and gives you time to study your opponent or the situation. It gives you time to study the opponents moves, how they set up their moves, their

tendencies, and their weaknesses and strengths. It allows you to feel their speed and timing. It allows you to recognize opportunities for counter attacking. It also allows you to recognize opportunities to take away their strong points, and opportunities to set up your own offensive attacking if necessary.

If you can keep an attacker from striking you by blocking or moving to make them miss, or by constantly moving to be a hard target to hit, you can cause them to start doubting themselves and lose confidence and possibly just stop attacking you.

When you realize that you have the ability to keep the attacker from striking you, your confidence increases. Confidence is our most important strength. When we are confident we are able to relax and stay calm even in intense situations. When we are relaxed and calm we see clearer, we understand clearer, and we think clearer. Therefore, we are able to make better decisions.

Scouting in a physical sense includes not only studying, physical situations around you but also your own physical body.

To scout your physical body, first study its present conditions:

- Is it healthy?
- Is it functioning properly?
- Is it in the shape you want?
- Are your muscles as strong as you want them?
- Is your heart as strong as you want it?
- Are your heart and lungs capable of intense activity?
- Is your body coordinated?
- Are all parts getting enough exercise?

If your body is not as healthy in any area as you want it, then study the cause and it will give you ideas on how to fix it. If you are having trouble getting motivated to change the way it is, think of the future consequences and repercussions if you do nothing to change it. This may help motivate you to do something about it.

Scouting in a mental sense is to study your thoughts. Are they healthy positive thoughts? Are they unhealthy negative thoughts? Are you in control of your thoughts? Do they

originate from yourself or elsewhere? Are you choosing your own thoughts? Are unwanted thoughts entering your mind and taking your attention?

A good time to study your thoughts is when you're faced with a problem or challenge. How does your mind respond to adversity? Is your first response negative? Are you thinking how terrible the problem is and why it had to happen to you, or does your mind respond positively and start searching for solutions?

We know that giving attention to thoughts gives them energy and strengthens them. If you consistently give them attention, you can bring them about whether they are negative or positive. We know that it is very difficult not to think about unwanted thoughts. It is much easier to block them out by focusing your attention on desired thoughts. We also know if you want to accomplish certain goals, you must consistently focus your attention on them, and think and feel what it would be like to experience these goals. This can motivate you to keep taking the necessary steps to follow through and accomplish your goals.

Scouting in an emotional sense means to study your emotions. If your emotions are overwhelming you, do some deep breathing to help calm yourself so that you can study what you're feeling. Whatever emotions you're feeling started because of what you were thinking. Sometimes you can change what you're feeling by changing what you're thinking. You can also change the way you're feeling by changing the way you are interpreting something or looking at it a different way.